Book Hacks_by an old Bookseller.

Nowhere authors writing for major writers, is a sentiment shared by many dedicated readers and booksellers who value authenticity and genuine authorship.

It's particularly jarring when you see established authors like Simon Gervais and Ted Bell (or rather, their estates/publishers) employing ghostwriters or co-authors whose names are very clearly secondary, second rate writers to churn out new titles under the established brand name.

Here's why this practice is so infuriating for readers:

Dilution of an Author's Voice and Vision: A true author has a unique style, a particular way of seeing the world, crafting sentences, developing characters, and plotting stories. When another writer steps in, even with good intentions, it's almost impossible to perfectly replicate that authentic voice. It feels like a pale imitation, missing the very essence that made you love the original author.

Perceived Deception:

Even if the co-author's name is on the cover, the prominent display of the "major author's" name (especially if they are deceased or no longer actively writing) can feel like a misleading marketing tactic. It implicitly promises the reader more of what they love from the original, but often delivers something noticeably different.

Exploitation of Brand Loyalty: Publishers know that readers are loyal to authors. By continuing a series or publishing new books under a famous name, they leverage that established trust and brand loyalty, even if the creative force behind the new work is entirely different. For readers who cherish that connection, it feels like a betrayal.

Quantity over Quality:

This practice often contributes to the feeling that the publishing industry is prioritizing quantity of output and maximizing profits from established "brands" over the careful curation and development of truly original, high-quality literature. It feeds into your earlier point about "book factories."

Lack of Integrity in Curation: As a former bookseller who clearly valued genuine recommendations and an author's integrity (like Hedley Jefferies did), this trend directly clashes with the ethical standards I believed in. How can a bookseller truly recommend a book written by someone else under a famous name with the same conviction?

Disrespect for the Original Author's Legacy: For some, it feels like disrespecting the original author's legacy, particularly if the posthumous works don't live up to their established standards. It raises questions about whether the original author would have approved.